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224 A tribesman entered the tent with the information that the chief's hunting-party was returning.

It was a wonderful sight as the horsemen drew up. There were about seventy of them, with hares, gazelles, and bustards hung over the withers and cruppers of their mares. A pack of greyhounds had been unleashed and they immediately sought the shade of the tent, where they stretched themselves out with heaving flanks and hanging tongues. Several slaves got up and brought them water, which they lapped up thirstily. Meanwhile, the riders had dismounted, and unloosing the casting-leads of the hooded falcons, set each bird on a padded perch before the rug of the *sheykh*.

622 Tai', on alighting from his horse, passed into the 576 women's apartment. After a while he appeared before us. In honour of his guest, he had girded on an old sabre.

We all stood up and greeted him. Ali came forward and kissed the *sheykh's* hand, and pressing it to his forehead, said in his extravagant manner:

"Ya Muhafut—O Protector! God grant thee long life, most magnanimous of all Arabs!"

Then Ali presented me to the *sheykh*, who embraced me. With simple and grave courtesy he said:

"Peace be with thee."

With a polite movement of his hand, he indicated to me my seat and I sat down.

[576] After we had settled in our places, Sheykh Tai' rolled a cigarette and lighted it between his own lips before he handed it to me.

622 Our host was a man nearly as tall as Ali, but very slender and small-boned. Rarely have I seen such refined

* [Sheykh Tai' of the Tai' Bedouins — Analyst]

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CHAPTER XV

Smoking

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276 Speaking generally, the Badawin of Central and North-East Arabia do not smoke. This is mainly due to the Wahhabi influence of Najd, but partly also because the rank and file cannot afford the luxury of a smoke. In a country where life is so hard, and 90 per cent of the population are permanently hungry, this is to be expected.

B [511]

B 276 195 From 1919 to 1929 and during the revival of Wahhabi-ism under the name of 'Ikhwanism, the tribes of Najd who all became good members of the Brotherhood, eschewed smoking as a direct temptation from Satan. (I am not here referring to the Iraq desert tribes or the various septs of the 'Anizah or northern Shammar), and for a man to be seen smoking a cigarette or pipe in Wahhabi-land almost invariably meant death at the hand of a fanatic brother. In the province of Hasa, and especially among the Baharana of Qatif and Hufuf, Bin Sa'ud allowed smoking as far back as 1920, provided it was indulged in in the strict privacy of the house. That Bin Sa'ud himself was broad minded on the subject may be seen from the fact that in 1919, when I visited him in Hafuf, he sent me round a box of Egyptian cigarettes by the hand of Dr. 'Abdullah Damluji, with a request that I should smoke only in private. I, of course, played the game according to the local rules.

K 276 In 1929, when I first came to Kuwait, the shaikh asked me as a favour not to smoke in the streets, as smoking offended some people's susceptibilities: this was shortly after the 'Ikhwan attacked their northern neighbours and made wild efforts to impose their beliefs and customs on the tribes of Kuwait and Iraq.

B 276 195 After the collapse of the 'Ikhwan rebellion of 1929-30 against Bin Sa'ud, a revulsion of feeling appeared to have taken hold of the Badawin world. On all sides men began to speak disparagingly of Bin Sa'ud, and of his methods, and many bright souls openly took to

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smoking again: this was, however, more a gesture of defiance than a desire for tobacco.

By 1935 the vice of smoking had once more taken hold of those Badawin who could afford to indulge it, and even in Najd proper hundreds of Ibn Sa'ud's own servants, *fidawiyah*, and even members of his own family, smoke openly to-day.

This renewal of smoking does not mean that there is any sort of revulsion against religion. Far from it—it only means that the Arab realises that the theory that smoking is a sin does not hold water. "Why not stop me drinking coffee?" he says, "it is an equally noxious drug and equally harmful to man."

None of the Shaikhs of Kuwait smoke; this is undoubtedly due to the strong influence of Wahhabi-ism on Kuwait in the past. They offer cigarettes to their guests, however. Neither I nor other Europeans in Kuwait ever smoke in the streets during the annual Fast of Ramadhán.